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OF

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OF

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TESTIMONIES.

BROWNING SWIFT.

A testimony of Sandwich Monthly Meeting of Friends, concerning our esteemed friend, Browning Swift.

This our beloved friend having been a member of this Monthly Meeting during the whole period of his life, and some of our minds still retaining the savor of his exemplary walk and religious labors amongst us, we are desirous of preserving some memorial of his life and of his expressions during his last sickness, for the consolation and encouragement of others who may be inclined to walk in the path of Truth; also, to bear testimony to the christian virtues with which he adorned his profession; and to bring into remembrance the sufficiency of that Divine Grace through which he experienced preservation, and was enabled to pursue his Christian course, and to become truly qualified to promote the cause of Righteousness.

Naturally he was of a mild and cheerful disposition, kind and affectionate towards all. As a Christian, he was sound in faith, and a believer in all the holy offices of Christ; in his outward coming wherein he tasted death for every man, and was the propitiatory sacrifice for our sins; and by taking up his daily cross and following a meek and crucified Saviour, he could from living experience testify of those offices, and of the benefit of his blood that was shed without the gates of Jerusalem.

In his conversation he was clean and blameless to a remarkable degree; often seeking occasion to turn the attention of the company he might be in, to religious subjects.

In his public appearances in the ministry he was careful to move with a single eye to the pointings of Divine Truth; to wait for the arising of the true gospel spring, and to abide under the influence of that baptising power, which alone can qualify for communicating gospel truths so as to minister encouragement and edification to the hearers. His communications were sound and clear, tending to encourage the sincere and honest hearted to hold on their way, and to arouse such as were at ease; and we believe many knew him as a tender father in Israel, leading them forward as children by the hand.

His religous labors were mostly within the limits of his own Quarterly meeting. About the year 1817, he made a religious visit to Vassalborough Quarterly meeting, and was favored to accomplish the visit to the satisfaction of those among whom his lot was cast, and to the peace of his own mind.

As a further testimony concerning our beloved friend, we refer to the following memorial preserved by his wife, which this meeting approves.

Signed on behalf of Sandwich Monthly Meeting of Friends, held at Yarmouth, 3d mo. 5, 1841.

NEWELL HOXSIE, Clerk.
HANNAH GIFFORD, Clerk for the day.

Browning Swift was the son of Silvanus and Elizabeth Swift, of Falmouth, Massachusetts; and was born the 17th of the eighth month, 1780. This their son, in early life became anxiously concerned, as he expressed it, to walk in the path of the Righteous. Many deep baptisms and conflicts of spirit, it was his lot to pass through, which he endured with patience, submitting his will to the divine will, and thus became as passive clay in the hands of the Great Potter; and was prepared as a vessel meet for the master's use.

He gave up to an apprehension of religious duty and came forth in the work of the ministry about the 25th year of his age. He was a diligent attender of meetings for worship and discipline; a kind, affectionate husband, and a tender father; holding up by precept and example this injunction, Follow me as I endeavor to follow Christ. It was his frequent practice to sit down with his family in retirement; and in these seasons he

was often favored to testify of the great goodness of the Lord. He was sensible of the responsibility of a parent, and was conscientiously concerned to instil into the tender minds of his offspring the principles of piety and virtue.

During his sickness it was his lot at times to be deeply tried with poverty of spirit, and at one time said, "I feel nothing but infirmities, and I have been almost ready to say, why is it so; but however trying, I have believed it a safe state, as the watch is kept to; for herein we learn our dependence upon Him, in whom all our treasures are. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."

At another time he said, "The returning of the Sun of Righteousness is again experienced; the visions of life are opened to my view, and a sweet assurance is granted that a mansion of rest is prepared for me in Heaven. O, with humble joy do I desire to return thanks to my God for so great a favor; I have merited nothing, but am an unprofitable servant. I could add much more of the great goodness of the Lord to me at this time, but I desire to be cautious lest I should go too far in speaking of the many favors and mercies that he has bestowed upon so unworthy a servant as I feel myself to be: and my desire for all my dear brethren and sisters in the Truth is, that they may be preserved from all defilement, that they may walk worthy of the vocation whereunto they are called with a high and holy call; and may those who have strayed into by-paths be brought back again to the precious fold; for help is laid upon one that is mighty."

At another time he said, "I have been looking over our meeting this morning; and desires were raised in my mind that an increasing concern for the well-ordering of society may be witnessed. I hope that those friends who have the oversight, will be faithful, and admonish in love, that God's work may be done as in his sight. I do greatly desire that when Friends meet together in order to worship Almighty God, they may endeavor to meet in his holy fear, and sit down in the silence of all flesh to wait upon him for a renewal of strength, that they may know the house of David to grow stronger and stronger. I believe if there is a gathering in His name, and a dwelling in His fear, He will condescend to raise up judges as at the

first, and counsellors as in the beginning; for He alone is able to qualify others to fill the places of those whom he sees meet to remove from works to rewards. O, may there be an increasing concern with the aged, the middle aged and the dear youth; for the Lord waiteth to be gracious to the workmanship of his holy hands. I have been led to petition on their account, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thy heritage to reproach, that the heathen rule over them. O strengthen thy dear children in this place; may the arms of their hands be made strong in Thee and in the power of Thy might." After which he remarked, "When there seems to be a host encamped against you, do not fear; look singly to your deliverer: and when there appears to be no way to pass, for the mountains of opposition on either side, and the sea before you, remember ancient Israel: the waters were divided for this peculiar people, and they were preserved by the arm of his power. His love is the same now as then. I have experienced it to be so; He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever."

At another time he said. "I have not followed cunningly devised fables, but living and substantial truth; although at times my faith is nearly tried, and for some days past my state has resembled that of the mariner; I have had stormy days that I could not take the sun, and starless nights that I could not see my way; and my little bark has been tossed as on the mighty ocean; yet this morning He that formerly said to the boisterous sea, peace, be still, has, by the same power, quieted my mind, with the consoling language, If thou pass through the fire it shall not kindle upon thee; or through the waters they shall not overwhelm thee; and my head is again lifted up in hope, that if I hold out to the end, I shall inherit the blessed promise: and the earnest desire of my mind is, that faith and patience may be still granted." At one time he expressed a desire to see some of his friends, "For," said he, "I am very much exercised on their account." They were invited and came; and he was enabled to relieve his mind in a wonderful manner. He received frequent visits from his friends during his sickness, with whom he often was dipped into feelings of sympathy, and was frequently exercised in testimony and sup-

plication, and I believe I may say to the strengthening and refreshing of one anothers' spirits.

On another occasion he supplicated thus: "O Lord, thou knowest what is best for us, and necessary that we should pass through, in order to prepare us for thy glorious kingdom, where nothing that is impure or unholy can ever enter. O dearest Father, let not thy hand spare, nor thine eye pity, until thou hast perfected thy work in me; and if it be consistent with thy will, grant that the guardian angel of thy presence may conduct my poor soul to its everlasting rest;" and then said, "I have this hope, that if my earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, I have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. This is my hope; I esteem it far greater riches than the increase of corn, wine or oil. I have no merit to plead; I have merited nothing, and am an unprofitable servant."

At another time he said, "My time here, I think, can be but a little longer, and I hope you will give me up cheerfully to Him whose right it is to call when and whom it seemeth to him good. I willingly resign myself, my little remaining family and the Church unto the Shepherd of Israel. He is a faithful Friend; he will be the widow's judge, and a father to the fatherless, as there is a stedfast relying upon him. Hold on your way, for He whom ye seek is near."

At another time he said, "In the midst of my sufferings it is a comfort to look upon my wife and only remaining daughter. Do keep in the littleness, with a single eye to your Leader, seeking the hidden manna daily. The Lord knoweth them that love and fear him. I do believe he will preserve, strengthen and support you through this trial. I can tell you that, notwithstanding all the sufferings I have to pass through, I would not exchange my situation if it were in my power; for I am content in the divine will. I have been much tried with poverty of spirit, and have had to pass through many sore conflicts at times during this sickness; and my faith and patience have been tried as to a hair's breadth; then my cry was, Most Holy One suffer me not to lose my confidence in thee; and be thou my support in these trying seasons. O be near and keep my feet that they do not slip, or turn aside from following after thee. I can say that I rejoice in tribulation."

At another time he thus supplicated, "O dearest Father, be pleased to be near at this time, and support me; for I have none in heaven but thee, and none on earth in comparison of thee. O be near and hold my head above the waves of Jordan. Be thou my stay and exceeding great reward. Be pleased to be near and support my dear family under this affliction.—Be thou near and round about them, as the mountains are round about Jerusalem." And soon after said, "I long to go home to my Father's house, for there is bread enough and to spare."

Near the close he called his wife to him and said, "Do not mourn for me, for I trust, I am prepared to enter into a mansion af rest." And about three hours after, he quietly breathed his last, the 6th of Sixth Month, 1829, aged 49 years.

At Sandwich Quarterly Meeting, held at New-Bedford the 1st of 4th month, 1841. The foregoing testimony and memorial respecting our late beloved friend, Browning Swift, deceased, was read; and much unity being expressed therewith, and the Women's Meeting concurring, the clerks were directed to sign the same on our behalf and forward it to the Meeting for Sufferings, with a copy of this minute annexed.

GEORGE W. BAKER,
MARY A. TUCKER, } Clerks.

BENJAMIN WORTH.

Testimony of Vassalboro' Monthly Meeting, concerning our friend, Benjamin Worth, deceased.

Although some time has elapsed since the decease of our beloved friend, whose memory is still dear to many, we believe it right to bear our testimony concerning him.

He was born on the island of Nantucket, in the year 1748. Of his early life we have but little account, except what has been found among his writings; from which it appears that he commenced a seafaring life when young, which calling he pur-

sued for several years; during this period, he was united in marriage with Phebe Coffin, in whom he found a kind and sympathising companion and help-meet. After his marriage he still continued for a time to traverse the watery deep, notwithstanding the many trials he had to encounter; among which he particularly notes that of being deprived of the privilege of attending religious meetings. At the commencement of the war with Great Britain in 1776, he abandoned the sea, and the following spring removed with his family and settled upon a lot of unimproved land, about 80 miles from the city of New-York, on the North River.

Here for a while he was favored to obtain a comfortable living. In contrasting his present situation with his former perilous life, he says, "I felt very thankful to my Creator." He observes that the year succeeding his removal, his prospects were promising, but soon a serious change took place. Orders were issued for drafting soldiers, and in consequence of the conscientious refusal of friends to bear arms, their property was taken and sold; which caused much suffering and of which he shared pretty largely.

It was about this time that his mouth was first opened to declare the wonderful dealings and condescending goodness of the all-wise Creator to his dependent creature man. This was a close trial to him, insomuch that when he believed the sacrifice called for, he several times shrank from the cross, and put it off until judgment was set so close, and the distress of his mind became so great, that he dared no longer withhold, but promised should the requirement again be made, he would yield implicit obedience thereunto; which covenant he was mercifully favored to keep; and made the offering in expressing a few words. By continuing in obedience to the manifestations of truth, more was required of him; and as he closely followed the leadings of the unerring guide, he became qualified to minister as a faithful steward of the manifold grace of God. The war continuing, and his means being limited, he removed to Nine Partners, and took a school which afforded him a comfortable living. Soon, however, a fresh trial of his faith ensued. He believed it required of him to leave all, and in the love of the gospel to visit the families of two large

Monthly Meetings. Through divine aid he was enabled to make the sacrifice, and performed the weighty service, visiting several who held slaves. He remarks, "That there was but little said, but the slaves were all set at liberty, about twenty in number. Thus the Lord wrought in a powerful manner, blessed be his holy name."

About the year 1784, with the unity of his friends, he removed within the compass of Purchase Monthly Meeting where he resided for several years, and was often called to travel in the service of truth, among Friends and others, to which he was enabled in a good degree, cheerfully to submit, frequently remarking how sweet was the peace and consolation he was favored to enjoy, as a rich reward for his labors. After residing in the state of New-York about 16 years, he believed it right for him to return to Nantucket; which with the unity of his friends he accomplished. After residing there several years, feeling desirous of being in a better situation to provide for his family and to obviate the necessity of his son's following the sea, with the concurrence of his friends he removed within the limits of this Monthly Meeting. During the remainder of his life, while his health permitted, he was often drawn in that love for the prosperity of truth so dear to his heart, to visit Friends and others within the compass of the Yearly Meeting to which he belonged, much to the satisfaction of Friends, and to the peace of his own mind.

Towards the close of his travels, after returning from a visit to the families of Friends, he thus writes, "Oh adorable goodness that went with me from house to house, and opened to me when sitting with families, what to say, and which at times was in a very plain way; for there are those who say they are Jews, but are not." He was of a sound and discriminating mind and discerning spirit, and often felt constrained to impart counsel to the unfaithful in a very close and impressive manner; plain dealing being one of his distinguishing characteristics, though tender and encouraging to the broken and contrite in spirit. His communications were clear and comprehensive, accompanied by the evidence of divine authority. He was often led to recommend true humility and simplicity, which he was concerned to enforce by example and precept.

For several of the last years of his life he was mostly confined at home, through bodily infirmity; and notwithstanding the outward man grew weaker and weaker, he retained the savor of life in an eminent degree, often evincing an ardent desire for the prosperity of Zion, and the enlargement of her borders. He often expressed the satisfaction he enjoyed in the company of his friends, many of whom can call to mind seasons of divine favor when present with him, wherein their spirits were mutually refreshed. About five weeks before his decease, he became more seriously ill, and gradually wasted away. A short time before his death, being visited by a friend, he observed, "When I awoke this morning, I became satisfied that my time had about come, that I should be released;" and then asked how it was with our meeting, whether we felt ancient goodness to be near; being answered, he replied, "that was all we could ask for." A few days before he expired, being asked how it was with him, he said "that he saw no cloud nor any thing in the way, and that all he had to do, was to wait patiently until his time came; that the time was not his but his Master's." This patient waiting he was mercifully favored to experience to the close, which took place the 22d day of the 8th month, 1838, in the ninetieth year of his age; and we doubt not that in the mercy of our Holy Redeemer he was prepared through the sanctification of the spirit to join the innumerable company of the spirits of just men made perfect in the realms of everlasting bliss.

Signed in and on behalf of Vassalboro' Monthly Meeting of Friends, held 4th mo. 19th, 1843.

JOSEPH H. COLE,
EUNICE NICHOLS, } Clerks.

The foregoing memorial being read in this meeting, was united with, and we feel bound to add that as a minister, he was sound in the faith and doctrines of the gospel of Christ, and in his public communications was concerned to declare his belief in the divinity and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Signed in and on behalf of Vassalboro' Quarterly Meeting of Friends, held 5th mo. 24th, 1843.

JOSEPH H. COLE,
SARAH N. JENCKINS, } Clerks.

CYRUS BEEDE.

A testimony from Sandwich Monthly Meeting of Friends, in the State of New-Hampshire, concerning our beloved friend, Cyrus Beede, deceased.

He was born at Poplin, the 9th of 3d month, 1766. His parents Daniel and Patience Beede, removed with their family to Sandwich, then a newly settled place, when he was quite young; not any of them being members of our religious society. It appears that he was, through the favor of divine goodness, early visited with a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, through obedience to which he was enabled to become a devoted follower of our Lord Jesus Christ. From his own account it appears that when young he was in the practice of attending the meetings for worship held in the neighborhood, and although not fully satisfied with their religious views, he continued to attend with them until his mind became concerned in relation to their doctrine, and forcibly impressed with a fear that if he continued to sit under it, the light with which he was favored would be taken from him, and he be left in darkness; from that time he ceased to attend their place of worship. He first became acquainted with the religious views of the society of Friends in regard to the doctrines and principles of the Christian religion through the instrumentality of some of the ministers thereof, who visited the place where he lived, and being convinced of the truth of them, and concerned to walk consistently therewith, he subsequently made application and was received a member in the 27th year of his age; and being concerned to submit to, and abide under the refining, baptising power of truth, he became prepared, and was evidently called by the Great Head of the Church, to the vocation of a gospel minister, and was acknowledged as such by the Society in the year 1808.

He was diligently engaged in the exercise of the gift entrusted to his charge, not only at home but considerably abroad, and as far as appears, to the acceptance and satisfaction of his friends. In his public communications he was clear and explicit as well as weighty and impressive, being often enabled

in a convincing manner to bring to view the great doctrines of the gospel of life and salvation through the propitiatory sacrifice and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the precious gift of the Holy Spirit which is promised in his name to lead and guide into all truth. He was a diligent attender of our religious meetings both for worship and discipline, when his health would permit; and was especially careful that his outward concerns should not hinder himself or his family from attending those held in the middle of the week.

In the various social and relative duties of life, he was a pattern worthy of imitation, being concerned to discharge them consistently with his religious profession. He was a kind and affectionate husband, a tender father, one who was engaged to bring up his children and those under his direction in piety and virtue. As a neighbor he was kind and obliging, concerned to use his influence to preserve peace and harmony not only in our own Society, but amongst others, by whom he was highly esteemed. He was a great lover of plainness, which was manifested by his example, in his deportment, house and furniture.

Although our friend was of a delicate constitution, he had through life been subject to but little confinement until the 58th year of his age, when he was visited with a severe and protracted sickness from which he never fully recovered; but during the last seven years of his life he suffered much from a pulmonary affection attended with a severe cough. Yet in this proving dispensation his fortitude and cheerfulness did not forsake him, nor did he appear to think his lot hard or his case trying. He gradually recovered so as to attend his own meeting which was near, and at times some neighboring meetings; and in the summer of 1840 attended our Quarterly Meeting, a distance of 60 miles, and some other meetings; in most or all of which he was much favored in his religious communications. After his return home he frequently bore his testimony for the truth, manifesting a lively and unabating concern for the promotion of the precious cause. Frequent and fervent were his labors to impress the necessity of maintaining love one towards another, and the duty of the forgiveness of injuries; querying impressively on what other condition can we rest our hopes of happiness? bringing to view the express declaration

of our Saviour, "But if ye from your hearts forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses." And as he drew near his close he seemed increasingly engaged both in public and private to impress the necessity of vital Christianity. On the 11th of the 4th month, 1841 he was seized with a violent sickness which at times overpowered his mental faculties; yet frequently in the course of his illness he manifested by his expressions his apprehension of the change that awaited him, mentioning how desirable it would have been if he could have made a few more religious visits; that he should have been willing to suffer not a little for the sake of paying some debts to the people; that he did not know but he had let too small things hinder him, but he believed all would be passed by, appearing to have a clear and unclouded prospect of a happy transition from time to eternity. Throughout the last day of his sojourn with us he appeared to have his understanding perfectly, and on being asked if he had been tried with any doubts in regard to his future well being, he replied, "Not any," and then added, "Oh; I have no doubt that it will be well with me;" and whenever a little relieved from the pressure of bodily suffering, which he bore with Christian patience, was tranquil and serene, to the great consolation of his friends, and so continued to the solemn close, which occurred on the morning of the 19th of the fourth month, 1841, aged 75 years. His remains were interred in Friend's burial ground, on the 21st, after a solemn meeting on the occasion. While we feel our loss in the removal from works to rewards of this our beloved friend, we can but humbly hope and trust it is his gain.

Signed by direction, and on behalf of our Monthly Meeting aforesaid, held 4th mo. 20th, 1843.

EZRA MEADER,
CAROLINE BEEDE, } Clerks.

The foregoing testimony, on behalf of our beloved friend, Cyrus Beede, deceased, has been read and approved; and is directed to be signed by the Clerk on our behalf.

From the minutes of Dover Quarterly Meeting, held at Dover, 4th mo. 27, 1843.

JOHN D. LANG, Clerk for this time.
LYDIA THOMPSON, Assistant Clerk.

ANDREW NICHOLS.

A testimony concerning Andrew Nichols, who departed this life on the 9th of the 9th month, 1841, aged 75 years and 9 months.

Andrew Nichols, son of Andrew and Anne Nichols, was born in South Kingstown, 3d of 1st mo. 1766. It appears that, from early youth, he was of a serious and solid turn of mind, and prepared, while young, to receive the good seed of the kingdom. But like many others, in seasons of unwatchfulness, he was suffered to wander in desolate places, yet he was at times mercifully sensible that heavenly good overshadowed him even to the tendering of his mind, and producing tears of contrition; and as he advanced in life and submitted to the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, he became prepared for usefulness in the Church, and for some years acceptably filled the station of an Elder.

After his appointment to this station, it pleased the Great Head of the Church to dispense unto him a gift in the ministry, which he was favored to occupy with much meekness, and to the acceptance of Friends during the remainder of his life.

In his conversation he was cheerful, and his life was marked with that humility and simplicity which is of the Truth. In his testimonies he was sound and edifying, and preached the Gospel, not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power; not seeking the applause of men, but the glory of God. He was, at times, favored to speak on doctrinal subjects with much clearness; and in his religious communications he was often instrumental in arousing the lukewarm and indifferent, and in speaking comfort and encouragement to the contrite and humble minded. At the last three meetings, particularly, which he attended, he was deeply solemnised under a sense of the love of our Holy Redeemer; and was enabled to speak to the edification and tendering of others, handing forth a portion of that heavenly good with which he appeared to be remarkably filled, as a parting legacy to those from whom he was soon to be separated. A

few days after the last of these opportunities, he was confined to his house in consequence of a severe fracture of one of his lower limbs, and other injuries causing much pain and suffering, which he bore with composure, patience and resignation, receiving it as from the hand of the Lord.

He invariably maintained his usual firmness of mind, evincing an unshaken faith in Him in whom he had long trusted; which faith in the Eternal Rock of Ages was now his support in the needful time; and there was evidence that Divine Goodness was over him in his great afflictions in an eminent manner. He was aware that his time was short, and said he did not know that he had any desire to be raised up again except on account of his family, which would be left a helpless one. He was, however, favored to resign them, and all he held dear into his Heavenly Father's keeping; his hope and faith seeming renewedly centred in Jesus Christ the Sanctifier of his people. To a friend, who came to see him a little before his close, calling him by name, he said, "I believe in sanctification through the blood of the Lamb;" and when the time of his departure arrived all with him appeared peaceful and quiet. Heavenly good was sensibly felt by those around, and as one falling into a sweet sleep, he was like a shock of corn fully ripe, gathered, we doubt not, into that garner of eternal rest prepared for the righteous.

Signed on behalf and by direction of Greenwich Monthly Meeting, held at Coventry, 5th mo. 1st, 1843.

PEREZ PECK, Clerk.
FREELOVE GREENE, Clerk for the day.

At Rhode-Island Quarterly Meeting, held at East-Greenwich the 4th of 5th mo., the testimony concerning our late friend Andrew Nichols, deceased, to which this is annexed, was read and approved. On behalf of the meeting,

DAVID BUFFUM, Clerk.
SARAH F. TOBEY, Clerk.

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